

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 01862 071357Z

50 R
ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /013 W
----- 020789
R 071302Z MAR 74
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5675

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AFSP, IR
SUBJ: FUNDING FOR WAGE INCREASE

REF: A. TEHRAN 1417; B. STATE 43187

1. IN VIEW OF THE MANDATE UNDER WHICH THE WAGE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED, SECTION 444 OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE ACT OF 1946, WE ASK FOR DEPARTMENT'S RECONSIDERATION OF OUR REQUEST FOR FUNDS REFTEL A.

2. WAGE SURVEY REFLECTS PREVAILING WAGE RATES ARE AVERAGE 33 PERCENT HIGHER THAN OUR PRESENT WAGE SCALE. DEPARTMENT'S DECISION TO FUND ONLY 6 PERCENT IN FY 74 WILL CAUSE A GRIEVOUS MORALE PROBLEM AS LOCAL EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATED FULLY IN THE SURVEY AND ARE AWARE OF THE RESULTS.

3. POST CONSIDERS IT ESSENTIAL THAT INCREASE FOR THE REMAINDER OF FY 74 BE RAISED FROM 6 PERCENT TO 16 PERCENT. A LESSER AMOUNT WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE AND COULD LEAD TO BREAKDOWN OF RELATIONS WITH OUR LOCAL EMPLOYEES. IN ORDER TO MAKE THE 16 PERCENT INCREASE PALATABLE, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO ASSURE OUR EMPLOYEES THAT AN ADDITIONAL 10 PERCENT WOULD BE FORTHCOMING EARLY FY 75. (FIVE OF FIRMS SURVEYED, AS WELL AS IRANIAN GOVERNMENT, HAVE ANNOUNCED AVERAGE 20 PERCENT WAGE INCREASE EFFECTIVE MARCH 21, BEGINNING OF IRANIAN NEW YEAR. THESE INCREASES WERE NOT REFLECTED IN EMBASSY'S WAGE SURVEY.)

4. POST REALIZES DEPARTMENT IS CONFRONTED WITH SERIOUS
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FUNDING PROBLEMS AND WE HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO REDUCE OUR

OPERATING EXPENDITURES. FOR EXAMPLE, DRASTIC CUTBACK IN MOTOR POOL OPERATIONS; VIRTUAL ELIMINATION OF OVERTIME FOR BOTH AMERICAN AND LOCAL EMPLOYEES; CURTAILMENT OF PROCUREMENT TO ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL ITEMS. POST WILL CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO FURTHER REDUCE EXPENDITURES.

5. AS OUR PROPOSED INCREASE MUST BE COORDINATED WITH OTHER AGENCIES, AN EARLY REPLY WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

6. WE UNDERSTAND DEPARTMENT HAS PENDING BEFORE CONGRESS A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION WHICH EMBASSY WOULD HOPE PROVIDES SUFFICIENT FUNDS TO COVER FULL WAGE INCREASE PROPOSED REFTEL A. IF IN DEPARTMENT'S VIEW THIS IS A REAL POSSIBILITY, EMBASSY OF OPINION THAT WE WOULD BE IN A BETTER PUBLIC RELATIONS POSITION VIZ-A-VIZ LOCAL EMPLOYEES IF WE COULD TELL THEM THAT DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF FULL WAGE SURVEY CAUSED BY APPROPRIATION PROCEDURES RATHER THAN OFFERING TOTALLY INADEQUATE SIX PERCENT ACROSS BOARD INCREASE. IF DEPARTMENT'S VIEW IS THAT SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION WILL NOT COVER WAGE INCREASE THEN EMBASSY FIRMLY OF OPINION THAT PROCEDURE DESCRIBED PARA 3 ABOVE IS MINIMUM NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN LOCAL PERSONNEL MORALE.
LEHFELDT

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